

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) A method of delivering a component to the colon of an animal comprising:  
coating the component with a ~~fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate~~ a coating according to claim 30; and  
orally administering the coated component to the animal for specific delivery of the component to the colon.
2. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructan.
3. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 2 wherein the fructan has an average degree of polymerization in the approximate range of 2 to 60.
4. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 3 wherein the fructan has an average degree of polymerization in the approximate range of 2 to 20.
5. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 4 wherein the fructan has an average degree of polymerization in the approximate range of 2 to 10.
6. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructo-oligosaccharide.
7. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is neosugar.

8. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the component is one or more of a mineral, vitamin, drug, bacteria, yeast, immune stimulator, nutrient, nutraceutical, electrolyte, chelated mineral, mold, enzyme, energy-providing compound, antibody, or acid.
9. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8 wherein the component is bacteria from the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacterium*.
10. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8 wherein the component is a nutraceutical.
11. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8 wherein the component is an enzyme.
12. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8 wherein the component is an immune stimulator.
13. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8 wherein the component is a drug.
14. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is utilized as an energy source by *Bifidobacterium* species, but not by *Salmonella* species.
15. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is utilized as an energy source by *Lactobacillus* species, but not by *Escherichia coli*.
16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the coating step comprises applying powdered fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate with a liquid to form a thin film coating on the component.
17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16 further comprising repeating the step of applying the powdered fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and liquid to achieve a multi-layered coating.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the coating step comprises combining the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate with a liquid to form a mixture and atomizing and spraying the mixture on the component to form a thin film coating on the component.
19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18 further comprising repeating the step of applying the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and liquid mixture to achieve a multi-layered coating.
20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 comprising coating the component with fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and one or more flavoring agent.
21. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the component is a bacteria.
22. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 21 wherein the bacteria is from the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacteria*.
23. (Cancelled)
24. (Withdrawn) A method of delivering a component to the colon of an animal comprising: coating the component with one or more prebiotics; and orally administering the coated component to the animal.
25. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 24 wherein the prebiotic is a fructose-based oligosaccharide, peptide, protein, or lipid that is not digested or absorbed in a stomach or small intestine, but is fermented by bacteria present in the colon.
26. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 24 comprising coating the component with a mixture of two or more prebiotics.

27. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26 wherein one of the prebiotics is fructo-oligosaccharide.
28. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 24 comprising coating the component with a mixture of one or more prebiotic and one or more flavoring agent.
29. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 24 wherein the component is one or more of a mineral, vitamin, drug, bacteria, yeast, immune stimulator, nutrient, nutraceutical, electrolyte, chelated mineral, mold, enzyme, energy-providing compound, antibody, or acid.
30. (Currently Amended) A composition for colon-targeted delivery comprising:  
one or more components to be delivered to the colon; and  
a ~~fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate~~ coating surrounding the component  
said coating comprising a fructo-oligosaccharide that is not digested or absorbed in a monogastric animal's stomach or small intestine, but is fermented by bacteria present in the colon, the fructo-oligosaccharide having an average degree of polymerization in the range of 2-10.
- 31-33. (Cancelled)
34. (Original) The composition of claim 30 wherein the coating further comprises a flavor enhancing agent.
35. (Original) The composition of claim 30 wherein the component is one or more of a mineral, vitamin, drug, bacteria, yeast, immune stimulator, nutrient, nutraceutical, electrolyte, chelated mineral, mold, enzyme, energy-providing compound, antibody, or acid.
36. (Original) The composition of claim 35 wherein the component is one or more beneficial bacteria from the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacteria*.

37. (Cancelled)

38. (Withdrawn) A method of masking the flavor of a component to be administered orally to an animal comprising coating the component with combination of a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and a flavoring agent.

39. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 38 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructo-oligosaccharide, inulin, or neosugar.

40. (Withdrawn) A method of enhancing the flowability of a component comprising coating the component with a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate.

41. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 40 within the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructo-oligo saccharide, inulin, or neosugar.

42. (Withdrawn – Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein the coating comprises a soya oligosaccharide.

43. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 42 wherein the soya oligosaccharide is stachyose.

44. (Withdrawn – Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein the coating comprises lactulose.

45. (Withdrawn – Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein the coating comprises a galactooligosaccharide.

46-49. (Cancelled)

**50. (New) The composition of claim 30, wherein the fructo-oligosaccharide has an average degree of polymerization in the range of about 6.**

**51. (New) The composition of claim 30, wherein at least 60% of said fructo-oligosaccharide has a degree of polymerization in the range of 3-20.**

**52. (New) The composition of claim 30, wherein at least 75% of said fructo-oligosaccharide has a degree of polymerization in the range of 3-30.**

**53. (New) The composition of claim 30, wherein said fructo-oligosaccharide has the following approximate distribution according to degrees of polymerization:**

<b>DP 1-10</b>	<b>40 %</b>
<b>DP 11-20</b>	<b>30 %</b>
<b>DP 21-30</b>	<b>18 %</b>
<b>DP 31-40</b>	<b>8 %</b>
<b>DP 41-50</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>DP 51-60</b>	<b>1%</b>

**54. (New) The composition of claim 52, wherein said component is one or more beneficial bacteria from the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacteria*.**

**55. (New) The composition of claim 52, wherein said component is polyethylene glycol.**